



2019-2020 School Action Fund - Planning
COMPETITIVE GRANT Application Due 5:00 p.m. CT, May 2, 2019

NOGA ID

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by P.L. 114-95, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Title I, Part A, Section 1003, School Improvement

Authorizing legislation

Applicants must submit one original copy of the application and two copies of the application (for a **total of three copies of the application**). All three copies of the application **MUST** bear the signature of a person authorized to bind the applicant to a contractual agreement. **Applications cannot be emailed.** Applications must be received no later than the above-listed application due date and time at:

Document Control Center, Grants Administration Division

Texas Education Agency

1701 N. Congress Avenue

Austin, TX 78701-1494

Grant period from **July 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020**

☒ Pre-award costs are not permitted.

Required Attachments

No attachments are required to be submitted with this application.

Amendment Number

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

N/A

Applicant Information

Organization **Edcouch-Elsa ~~SD~~ ISD** CDN **108-903** Vendor ID **74-6000810** ESC **01** DUNS **023530199**

Address **920 W. Santa Rosa** City **Edcouch** ZIP **78538** Phone **956-262-6000**

Primary Contact **Maria Del Carmen Garcia** Email **cargarcia@eeisd.org** Phone **956-262-6000**

Secondary Contact **Ronaldo Cavazos** Email **rcavazos@eeisd.org** Phone **956-262-6000**

Certification and Incorporation

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the grant application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the grant application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant application, guidelines, and instructions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Debarment and Suspension Certification |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Provisions and Assurances | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lobbying Certification |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application-specific Provisions and Assurances | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ESSA Provisions and Assurances requirements |

Authorized Official Name **Ronaldo Cavazos** Title **Superintendent**

Email **rcavazos@eeisd.org** Phone **956-262-6000**

Signature  Date **04/22/2019**

Grant Writer Name **N/A** Signature _____ Date _____

☐ Grant writer is an employee of the applicant organization.

☐ Grant writer is **not** an employee of the applicant organization.

RFA # **701-19-107** SAS # **438-20**

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701-19-107-003

Application stamp-in date and time

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Shared Services Arrangements

X SSAs are **not permitted** for this grant.

Identify/Address Needs

List up to three quantifiable needs, as identified in your needs assessment, that these program funds will address. Describe your plan for addressing each need.

Quantifiable Need	Plan for Addressing Need
Currently, Carlos F. Truan Junior High School's rating has been listed as Improvement Required (IR), which shows need for a research-based intervention. (High-need Campus - 20 points)	The district, along with the TEA-designated Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider, will work together to review data, further identify needs, and develop a personalized plan for transforming the school and leading it out of Improvement Required (IR) status.
The campus has a Meets Grade Level or Above rate of 37% on the ELA/Reading STAAR test, which is significantly lower than the State's rate of 46%. (TAPR 2017-2018)	The district will address this rate by conducting an exploratory planning process to identify the "best-fit" school action plan. Once carefully selected, the action plan will provide students with a new learning environment to increase student and parental involvement, as well as, substantially increase student achievement.
The campus currently has a student disciplinary placement rate of 4%, which is almost four times higher than the State's average of 1.3%. (TAPR 2017-2018)	To address this percentage, the district will work to identify a school action plan that will improve the campus culture and provide the best environment capable for optimal learning opportunities. This will ultimately have a positive impact on the students' academic success, as well as, their behavior.

SMART Goal

Describe the summative SMART goal you have identified for this program (a goal that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely), either related to student outcome or consistent with the purpose of the grant.

The district's goal is to identify the "best-fit" school action plan to impact student success. This goal addresses the SMART elements, to include: Specific—Our campus will partner with a vetted and matched school action technical assistance provider to help develop and implement an appropriate school action plan; Measurable—To complete the Fidelity of Implementation Tracker and increase student academic success and student behavior; Achievable—By utilizing the leadership support offered by the Superintendent; Relevant—To produce high-quality students from high-performing schools to meet the local workforce need, as well as, increase students' scores; and Timely—To begin the implementation of the program by July 1, 2019, and aggressively address the plan of action during and after the grant period.

Measurable Progress

Identify the benchmarks that you will use at the end of the first three grant quarters to measure progress toward meeting the process and implementation goals defined for the grant.

First-Quarter Benchmark

In developing the benchmarks that will be utilized to measure the progress towards program goals, the district created a list of events for the initial period, which will consist of the following:

- Selecting in good faith a TEA-designated Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider by August 2019;
- Collecting campus data to begin the planning process to select a school action plan;
- Identifying a Project Manager;
- Attending at least one (1) grant orientation meeting; and
- Identifying and implementing at least two (2) research-based strategies into the program.

Measurable Progress (Cont.)**Second-Quarter Benchmark**

For the second quarter of the program, the following benchmarks have been established to measure progress:

- Negotiating and signing a contract with the Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider by October 15, 2019;
- Completing fidelity of implementation revisions with the Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider by October 15, 2019;
- Providing on-going access to TEA for on-site visits to the campus; and
- Attending a minimum of two (2) technical assistance meetings and sharing of best practices through the TEA-designated Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider.

Third-Quarter Benchmark

Benchmarks used to measure the program's third-quarter progress include the following:

- Submitting an implementation plan, using a TEA-approved format, developed with the Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider by June 1, 2020;
- Ensuring a minimum of 45% of students Meet Grade Level or Above on the ELA/Reading STAAR test;
- Decrease the percentage of students that require disciplinary placement by 50%; and
- Meeting at least ten (10) of the twelve (12) Improvement Required (IR) system safeguards in order to help remove the campus' IR designation.

Project Evaluation and Modification

Describe how you will use project evaluation data to determine when and how to modify your program. If your benchmarks or summative SMART goals do not show progress, describe how you will use evaluation data to modify your program for sustainability.

The district will use project evaluation data to determine when and how to modify the exploratory planning program, as well as, ensure that clearly specified and measurable processes and procedures are in place. The evaluation process will include: Conducting surveys with campus administration and staff to provide continuous feedback on the progress of the program; Reviewing SMART goals and benchmarks; and Having the Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider complete a questionnaire evaluating the district's planning strategies and progress in completing the implementation plan.

The evaluation will include objective performance measures and indicators of program accomplishment that are clearly related to the intended results. A wide range of evaluation instruments will be used to identify program accomplishments, refinements, or failures. The data collected may include: Number of scheduled opportunities for campus teachers to receive coaching and/or professional development; Number of times the district met with Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider; and How many evidence-based strategies were created during the planning phase.

Additionally, the evaluation provides the opportunity to examine the effectiveness of strategies being currently implemented. Teachers will be asked to participate in surveys that will provide feedback on the current instructional strategies, trainings, and activities in order to carefully select the appropriate school action model during the implementation phase of the program.

Finally, professional development training obtained through local, state, and federal funds will be a tremendous resource that will aid in sustaining strategies learned and implemented during the grant cycle. This acquired resource, coordinated with Title I (high-poverty), Instructional Materials Allotment (IMA), and state compensatory funds, will ensure program sustainability is continued after funding ends.

Statutory/Program Assurances

The following assurances apply to this grant program. In order to meet the requirements of the grant, the grantee must comply with these assurances.

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

- ☒ The applicant provides assurance that program funds will supplement (increase the level of service), and not supplant (replace) state mandates, State Board of Education rules, and activities previously conducted with state or local funds. The applicant provides assurance that state or local funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. The applicant provides assurance that program services and activities to be funded from this grant will be supplementary to existing services and activities and will not be used for any services or activities required by state law, State Board of Education rules, or local policy.
- ☒ The applicant provides assurance that the application does not contain any information that would be protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from general release to the public.
- ☒ The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all Statutory Requirements and TEA Program Requirements as noted in the 2019-2020 School Action Fund - Planning Program Guidelines.
- ☒ The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all Performance Measures, as noted in the 2019-2020 School Action Fund - Planning Program Guidelines, and shall provide the Texas Education Agency and the matched school action technical assistance provider, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.
- ☒ The applicant provides assurance that it will contract and work in good faith with the TEA vetted and matched school action technical assistance provider and agency-provided technical assistance.
- ☒ The applicant will budget at least 25% of the total award as "Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider" on schedule 6200.
- ☒ The applicant assures that contracts with matched school action technical assistance provider will be negotiated and signed by October 1, 2019.
- ☒ The applicant assures that a project manager will be identified. Please note: this position may be funded by other fund sources.
- ☒ The LEAs pursuing a partner-managed model assure that a financial spending analysis will be performed in accordance with TEA requirements.
- ☒ The applicant assures that all fidelity of implementation revisions will be complete on or before October 15, 2019.
- ☒ The applicant assures access will be provided for onsite visits to the LEA and campus by TEA and its contractors.
- ☒ The applicant assures attendance and participation in grant orientation meetings, technical assistance meetings, other periodic meetings of grantees, and sharing of best practices through the TEA program office.
- ☒ The applicant assures that an implementation plan, using a TEA approved format, will be developed with the school transformation partner by June 1, 2020.
- ☒ The applicant assures partners operating campuses under the partner-managed option must commit to Lone Star Governance participation.
- ☒ The applicant assures Pre-K "New Schools" will designate a feeder comprehensive campus by May 1, 2020.
- ☐ **For LEAs pursuing the Create a new school action model:** The applicant assures that enrollment at a new school must prioritize students attending or zoned to a 2018-2019 Comprehensive and/or Targeted school.
- ☐ **For LEAs pursuing the Partner-managed model:** The applicant assures commitment to the Adoption of Model Authorizing policy and participation in the Texas Authorizer Leadership Academy.

Statutory Requirement

Please refer to the Program Guidelines page 9 and address the six questions below:

1)

The district will carry out its support and improvement activities by identifying and partnering with the Matched School Action Technical Assistance Partner, as well as, by hiring a qualified Project Manager to develop an exploratory, strategic plan that is designed to assist Carlos F. Truan Junior High School in improving the campus. This will easily be done through the additional leadership support offered by the Superintendent, who has developed close ties and relationships with numerous staff members throughout the district during his tenure.

The ultimate objectives of the school improvement plan will be to:

- Consult with previous grant awardees to identify, develop, and implement research-based strategies;
- Develop a high-quality planning process; and
- Develop a culture of high expectation.

The Matched School Action Technical Assistance Partner, as well as, the Project Manager will each assist in the development of a school improvement plan and will assist in carrying out the program by selecting the school action model strategies needed to ensure an increased number of students are in great schools and create better options for the district's students.

2)

As a school that receives funding under Title I, Part A, the district has established protocols for monitoring school improvement plans upon submission. This includes establishing a team to implement the Texas Accountability Intervention System (TAIS), which assisted in establishing the foundational systems, actions, and processes that support the continuous improvement of Carlos F. Truan Junior High School. This includes: data analysis; needs assessment procedures; development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the improvement plan; and progress reporting.

a)

The district has established milestones, identified evaluation methods, set associated indicators of accomplishments, and developed data collection processes. The milestones and indicators will be tied directly to the exploratory planning process that will be utilized during the grant funding period. By monitoring these milestones and indicators, plus utilizing the defined evaluation methods and data collection processes, Edcouch-Elsa ISD can monitor the implementation of the strategies and adjust any activity or training not making significant progress.

b)

The improvement plan, as well as, the evaluation methods/processes and indicators of accomplishment, will be utilized to determine if the campus is on track for meeting the proposed goals and objectives. If needed, additional actions will be implemented to address the unsuccessful implementation of the proposed school improvement plan. To determine if action is needed, the district and campus administration, as well as, the Matched School Action Technical Assistance Partner will review student data that demonstrates if progress is being made in meeting each of the goals and objectives every quarter. If it is determined that the plan is being unsuccessfully implemented, revisions will be made.

3)

The Superintendent and Project Manager will be responsible for facilitating the processes governed by state and federal law to ensure the rigorous recruitment, screening, selection, and evaluation of any external agencies with whom the district will partner with are followed. Additionally, Edcouch-Elsa ISD will ensure there is an uninterrupted flow of goods and services to efficiently operate the district's expenses effectively.

Moreover, the Superintendent has the authority to commit district funds to the acquisition of goods. However, any single, budgeted purchase of goods or services that exceeds the district's approved threshold, regardless of whether the goods or services are competitively purchased, shall require Board approval before a transaction may take place. For example, in the selection of the Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider, the district will work with Texas Education Agency (TEA) to ensure the partner is appropriately vetted to demonstrate a strong track record of developing and implementing school actions. Once selected, an official contract will be executed and will be on file with the TEA. This contract will then be taken to the Board for approval to ensure the partner is paid their allotted amount.

Statutory Requirement (Cont'd)

4)

Edcouch-Elsa ISD will align other federal, state, and local resources to carry out activities supported with funds received through the School Action Fund – Planning Grant. The district combines local, state, and federal resources (i.e. Title I, State Comp.) to expand programs, minimize barriers, and increase student achievement. Since resources are limited, the challenge for the district is to make sure that every dollar spent is utilized to its fullest potential. Furthermore, program alignment will include personnel, technology and infrastructure, curriculum, software, facilities, and trainings to support and effectively deliver a single and comprehensive school improvement plan. This program will be cost-effective because existing resources such as office space, classrooms, telephones, Internet service, utilities, staff, and teachers will be utilized as in-kind. The proposed program is replicable to other schools that have similar student and academic demographics since the district will be following state-approved models. In this manner, the district will ensure that these acquired funds will be used to supplement or increase the level of service, and not supplant state and local funds.

5)

Practices and policies will be modified for this grant opportunity to allow for operational flexibility, as evidenced in the letter of support provided by the Superintendent. (10 points) It is the intent of Edcouch-Elsa ISD and its School Board to allow Carlos F. Truan Junior High School administrators, the Project Manager, and Matched School Action Technical Assistance Partner the operational flexibility to fully plan for and develop a school improvement plan. District and campus data illustrates that Carlos F. Truan Junior High School has a unique student population that has its own obstacles and needs. Therefore, the campus will be provided the flexibility to modify their policies and instructional methods in order to identify, develop, and implement research-based strategies, augment teaching and learning strategies, and develop a culture of high expectation.

If the proposed modifications are deemed to be valid, the school improvement plan will be modified, which will enable full and effective implementation of plans. These changes will be monitored for effectiveness and will hopefully lead the campus out of Improvement Required (IR) status.

6)

The proposed program is designed to incorporate multiple evidence-based strategies during its implementation. One of these strategies includes providing on-going coaching/technical assistance and support to teachers and school leaders by the Matched School Action Technical Assistance Partner. A comprehensive review was conducted to identify the benefits of providing coaching/technical assistance and its impact on teachers' implementation of evidence-based practices. A total of 13 studies from the 20 years of literature were researched and found that in general, coaching/technical assistance improved the extent to which teachers accurately implement evidence-based practices such as Class-Wide Peer Tutoring, Direct Instruction, Learning Strategies, and Positive Behavior Support in classrooms or practicum settings. The retrieved studies also suggest that highly engaged, small-group initial training, followed by multiple observations, feedback, and modeling are critical components across coaching/technical assistance interventions. Some of these studies also provide promising data to support the consequential effects of coaching on improvements in student achievement. (Using Coaching to Improve the Fidelity of Evidence-Based Practices: A Review of Studies, Aug. 2010.)

TEA Program Requirements

TEA Program Requirement 1: Please identify one of the following eligible school action models. Once selected, please indicate whether the school action model will be district or partner managed. ***Note:** The district or partner managed option should only be selected if the LEA chooses from one of the following school action models: "Restart a struggling school" or "Create a new school". Additionally, the LEA may only select the partner-managed option for the "Replicate a successful school model".

Select one school action model below:

- ☐ Restart a struggling school
- ☐ Create a new school
- ☐ Replicate a successful school (must select Partner-managed option)
- ☐ Reassign students from a struggling school (type of model management does not apply)
- ☒ Exploratory planning (type of model management does not apply)

Select how model will be managed:

- ☐ District-managed
- ☐ Partner-managed

TEA Program Requirement 2: Please describe the following:

a) Please describe the evaluation process and criteria utilized for selecting the school action model.

Before selecting the appropriate school action model, the district conducted a thorough evaluation process to collect data from the campus (i.e. student achievement results, attendance data, test results, report cards, graded classwork).

In developing the proposed application and budget, the district also met to determine what the overall goals and objectives of the planning grant would be, as well as, what strategies and activities would be implemented. These program activities/strategies relate directly to the program goals, local objectives, and strategies, as well as, the district's Mission Statement. The objectives the district wishes to achieve through this funding opportunity include:

- 1.) Identify the Matched School Action Technical Assistance Partner that will be providing guidance and support during the planning phase of the school action model;
- 2.) Identify research-based strategies that will be implemented to increase the quality of the campus;
- 3.) Supplement teaching with evidence-based learning strategies;
- 4.) Develop a culture of high expectation;
- 5.) Select the appropriate school action model; and
- 6.) Provide customized training as determined by need.

Once the evaluation process and criteria were utilized, it was determined that Carlos F. Truan Junior High School would be selected to submit an application under the exploratory planning model to TEA for the School Action Fund - Planning Grant. The district hopes that this grant will enable them to select the appropriate school action plan for the implementation phase; thereby, assisting the campus in removing its IR rating.

TEA Program Requirements

b) Please describe the district vision for improving the campus(es) or engaging in a thoughtful planning process to implement a school action.

District Vision: Edcouch-Elsa ISD has a clear vision that is built on the premise of a campus that is low-performing and is in need of assistance. Therefore, the district will pursue the exploratory planning model to best assist with transforming Carlos F. Truan Junior High School into a high-quality campus.

Process: The district will formulate a thorough, strategic planning process which will include: Meeting with program administrators to determine the direction of the school; Meeting with teachers to get an understanding of the types of curriculum/strategies that they currently implement; Receiving feedback from teachers on the types of trainings and workshops that can facilitate growth; and Identifying which school action plan would best fit the needs of the campus.

Moreover, the district's School Board will participate in Lone Star Governance Board Training on May 3 and May 4, 2019, in order to establish an intense focus on improving student outcomes and understanding the legal and fiscal responsibilities of the Board.

Although this vision may seem unattainable, Edcouch-Elsa ISD is confident that with the assistance of the Matched School Action Technical Assistance Partner, the Project Manager, and support from the Superintendent, this vision will become a reality.

c) Please describe how the grant aligns to and accelerates the district's broader strategy and theory of action.

The district's broader strategy includes providing a safe and friendly environment where students can learn basic skills and core academic content, as well as, develop the social competencies that will lead to developing a well-rounded future workforce. The grant directly aligns to both the broader strategy and accelerates the theory of action because both wish to create better educational opportunities for students. (10 points)

Moreover, Edcouch-Elsa ISD created a theory of action plan that brings consistency of systemic approach and organizational philosophy throughout the campus. This theory not only positively impacts student achievement but also implements decision-making procedures that ensures each campus is given uniform guidance. The theory of action clearly describes the responsibilities of each staff member, as well as, the chain of command.

The theory of action includes the following:

- Defining the instructional strategies and foundations that apply to all campuses;
- Rating and measuring each campus' student success by monitoring student data (i.e. test scores, coursework, etc.);
- Defining the roles and responsibilities of district and campus administration and instructional staff;
- Identifying areas of weakness and providing research-based practices;
- Providing flexibility to each campus based on student academic achievement and performance measures; and
- Creating an atmosphere of collaboration to ensure the campuses work together in unity.

d) Please identify the district staff member to coordinate the planning grant and the qualifications of the identified staff member.

Ms. Maria Del Carmen Garcia will coordinate the planning grant. She has worked for the district for over 25 years and has a vast knowledge in implementing grant programs. She has provided oversight on : the School Improvement Grant, the P-TECH Planning Grant, and the Math Innovation Zone Planning Grant. Her qualifications are as follows: Masters in Education Administration, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, and 34 years of experience in the education field.

Equitable Access and Participation

Check the appropriate box below to indicate whether any barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups that receive services funded by this grant.

- ☒ The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this grant.
- ☐ Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.

Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	

PNP Equitable Services

Are any private nonprofit schools located within the applicant's boundaries?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

Are any private nonprofit schools participating in the grant?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

5A: Assurances

- ☐ The LEA assures that it discussed all consultation requirements as listed in Section 1117(b)(1) and/or Section 8501(c)(1), as applicable, with all eligible private nonprofit schools located within the LEA's boundaries.
- ☐ The LEA assures the appropriate Affirmations of Consultation will be provided to TEA's PNP Ombudsman in the manner and time requested.

5B: Equitable Services Calculation

1. LEA's student enrollment	
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	
4. Total current-year grant allocation	
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the grant's defined limit	
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	
LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)	

Request for Grant Funds

List all of the allowable grant-related activities for which you are requesting grant funds. Include the amounts budgeted for each activity. Group similar activities and costs together under the appropriate heading. During negotiation, you will be required to budget your planned expenditures on a separate attachment provided by TEA.

PAYROLL COSTS (6100)**BUDGET**

Project Manager Stipend	15,000
Teachers' Stipends	30,000
Substitute Pay	15,000
Benefits	5,000

PROFESSIONAL AND CONTRACTED SERVICES (6200)

Matched School Action Technical Assistance Provider	75,000
Intensive On-going Training and Follow-up Services Identified by Needs	40,000
Professional Development: Trainings, Mentoring, and Coaching Strategies with tailored materials	10,000

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS (6300)

Supplies and Materials that do not exceed the one-to-one staff/student ratio	59,934
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OTHER OPERATING COSTS (6400)

Travel to Required Trainings and Professional Development	10,000

CAPITAL OUTLAY (6600)

SMART Boards for Planning Meetings	20,000

Total Direct Costs 279,934

Indirect Costs 20,066

TOTAL BUDGET REQUEST (Direct Costs + Indirect Costs) 300,000